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Wednesday, December 19, 2012

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VULNERABLE: Thousands of elderly people will die in their homes in Essex and east London this winter.

SPREAD THE WARMTH FOR THE ELDERLY THIS WINTER

ELDERLY people suffering from the cold winter need more help from neighbours, friends and relatives over the festive season, charities have warned.

Housebound and cash strapped pensioners will struggle most to stay warm.

Age UK has joined up with The Red Cross and the Essex Community Foundation to offer Emergency Winter Warmth Packs funded by public donations.

Charities predict several thousand people will die in Essex and east London over the winter because they cannot afford to pay booming prices.

Paul Farthing, director of Fundraising at Age UK, said: "Through this year's Spread the Warmth campaign we are hoping to inspire

everyone to act now to do their bit to lessen the impact of winter for older people this year.

"There really is something simple that everyone can do to get involved in our campaign, from making a Big Winter Pledge to donating much needed funds so that we can continue to work with our partners to provide quality, targeted support for people in later life who need looking after."

The campaign and appeal has already raised almost £20,000 across Essex and east London and is supported by politicians and religious leaders.

The Yellow Advertiser is once again promoting the Surviving Winter Appeal.

Jo Murphy, from the Essex Community Foundation, which is running the Essex branch

of the campaign, said: "The huge amount raised is thanks to the generosity of local people who have made donations of all sizes.

"We are particularly grateful to the Yellow Advertiser for all their support in promoting the appeal."

To donate to the appeal, cut out and fill in the adjacent form inside the paper.

Older people and their families can call Age UK Advice for free on 0800 169 65 65, where they can also order a free copy of 'Winter wrapped up' with a free thermometer.

Packs are available for anyone over 65 on means tested incomes or benefits. The packs include non perishable food, blankets, socks, hot water bottles, flasks and cans of soup and beans.

■ Turn to pages 2 and 3 to find out more.

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INSIDE

this week



Fun for the family in panto season

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Yellow Advertiser

Yellow Advertiser Ltd, Acorn House, Great Oaks, Basildon, Essex SS14 1AH.

The office is open between 8.30am-5.30pm from Monday to Thursday and until 5pm on Friday.

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Tindle Newspapers Ltd

Printed by Trinity Mirror plc, St Albans Road, Watford, Herts. The Yellow Advertiser is registered as a newspaper by Royal Mail.

Recycled paper made up 80.3 per cent of the raw material for UK newspapers in 2005.



Surviving Winter Appeal 2012

Help support the elderly

Readers are being urged to give support to the 2012 Surviving Winter Appeal to help elderly and vulnerable people cope through the harsh winter months. Caroline Taylor, programmes director for the independent charitable trust, Essex Community Foundation (ECF), which is linking with the YA for the campaign, said: "It is great news that the YA is joining forces with us this year in the campaign to bring much needed help to people at risk during the worst of the winter weather. The Yellow Advertiser will be a very strong partner for the campaign and we are confident that the Surviving Winter Appeal will be an even greater success this year." Age UK revealed that 3.5million pensioners do not get help or company from their neighbours and called on everyone to help. This is how you can help.

Surviving Winter



THE 2012 Surviving Winter appeal has been launched by local charitable trusts in east London and Essex.

Essex Community Foundation and its partner organisations in east London hope the appeal will raise £50,000 this year. Caroline Taylor, programmes director for the foundation said: "We are urging the generous people of Essex to support this campaign to bring vital help to people at risk during the worst of the winter weather.

"The Surviving Winter Appeal was such a success last year, raising more than £30,000 in our area, which exceeded all our expectations.

"A great number of people came forward with such generosity, giving their winter fuel allowance to the appeal, but there were also very many smaller amounts from lots of people of all ages.

"We are asking for an even greater response this year. Because we are linking with Age UK and the British Red Cross, we will be able to identify and help vulnerable individuals who are at risk and make sure they receive the right sort of help and support not only during the winter months, but also throughout the year. Winter can be a very isolating time and we have

already seen that conditions can be very difficult. Older people as well as others who are vulnerable are often afraid of going out.

"In Essex it is estimated that around 600 people died last year because of cold weather and poor living conditions. There are 250,000 people aged 65 and over in our county and they are particularly at risk during the winter, as 90 per cent of deaths at this time of year are in this age group.

"We know that elderly people are worried about the messages coming out about fuel prices and many of them fear they will have to skimp on heating their homes.

"We are very grateful to the generous people who have made donations to start off this year's Surviving Winter Appeal. Now we need more people to support the campaign to help safeguard the health and welfare of the people we all want to help protect, the elderly and vulnerable, so that they can keep safe and well during the winter months.

"Elderly people and others at risk can register through the Surviving Winter Appeal to receive warm packs and food packs to help them through



APPEAL: Caroline Taylor.

the cold weather."

For more details contact Essex Community Foundation on 01245 355947 or visit www.essexcommunityfoundation.org.uk

Chemists



Southend - Every Sun (10am-8pm), Chemist@Southend, 75 Queens Way; every Sun (10am-4pm), Tesco In-store Pharmacy, Prince Avenue, Westcliff; (10am-4pm), Sainsburys, 45 London Rd; (10am-4pm), Asda Stores, North Shoebury Rd, Shoeburyness. **Boxing Day Wed 26 Dec:** (9am-5pm), Asda, North Shoebury Rd, Shoeburyness; (8.30am-6pm), Boots, Royals Shopping Centre, Unit 2, High St, Southend. **Leigh** - Every Sun (8am-11pm) Derix Healthcare Pharmacy, (opposite side of Leigh Primary Care Centre), 1065 London Rd.

Tides

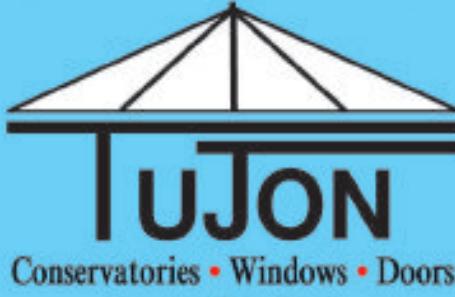
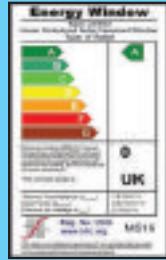


High tide at Southend Pier:
Thurs: 05.12 5.4m 17.54 5.3m
Fri: 06.06 5.2m 18.53 5.0m **Sat:** 07.08 5.0m 19.57 4.9m **Sun:** 08.17 4.9m 21.03 4.9m **Mon:** 09.25 4.9m 22.03 5.0m **Tues:** 10.24 5.0m 22.53 5.2m **Weds:** 11.14 5.2m 23.36 5.3m.

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7. Make sure that fitters are not on price per window, but on set amount of money
8. Always visit showroom to view products

For more free advice call Tujon on: 01268 566606 or 0800 7830887



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■ Surviving Winter Appeal 2012

How to get involved with appeal



THERE are various ways to support the Surviving Winter Appeal:

- Text COLD00£10 (or other amount) to 70070
- You can go online to www.justgiving.com/winter-appeal-2012
- Send a cheque to Essex Community Foundation, 121 New London Road, Chelmsford, CM2 0QT

please complete and return the form and remember to tick the Gift Aid box

■ Donate your winter fuel payment. For people in the 60 plus age bracket ECF is suggesting that those who do not need their Winter Fuel Payment, which is given to everyone whatever their income, could consider donating it to the Surviving Winter Appeal.

Surviving Winter Appeal donation form

I/we would like to support the Surviving Winter Appeal.

Name..... Address.....

Postcode..... E-mail.....

If you are a UK tax payer tick here ... so ECF can claim Gift Aid on your donation.

Please return this slip with your donation to: Essex Community Foundation, 121 New London Road, Chelmsford, CM2 0QT
The Surviving Winter Appeal is managed by Essex Community Foundation Reg. Charity No 1052061



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nowhere near the same level of winter deaths means that we should not accept this as inevitable. Increasing the investment in improving the energy efficiency of our housing, particularly for those who are poor and vulnerable, has to be an urgent priority for the UK Government."

■ People worried about their energy bills this coming winter are advised to see if there may be grants and discounts available to help with energy costs. Call the Energy Saving Advice Service on 0300 123 1234.

Spread the Warmth

AGE UK has kicked off its third annual Spread the Warmth winter campaign in Essex and east London.

Spread the Warmth runs until March 2013. Older people and their families can call Age UK Advice for free on 0800 169 65 65, where they can also order a free copy of Winter Wrapped up with a free thermometer.

Alternatively they can visit www.spreadthewarmth.org.uk to download the guide, get more information about the Spread the Warmth campaign and find out where their local Age UK office or shop is.

There are lots of ways to help Age UK Spread the Warmth this winter. People can make a donation simply by calling 0800 169 87 87.

Excess deaths

FUEL poverty means a number of districts in Essex and east London have levels of 'excess seasonal death', according to a new report.

Coroners courts refuse to classify 'death from cold in the home' as an unnatural death, which means details of the problem are not widely known.

A coroner's officer at Chelmsford said pensioner's dying of cold outside of their home – in the garden or in park – would be subject to an inquest.

He was unable to say why the coroner investigates falls in the home, but not death from cold.



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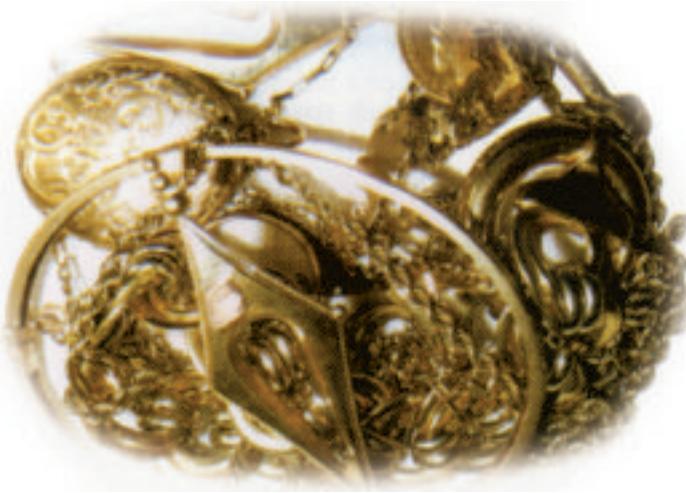
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New centre to offer mental health advice

By Paul Giles

A NEW centre offering mental health advice will be the first of its kind to open in the UK.

The new £600,000 centre in Southchurch Road, Southend, will be a walk-in information centre for people to get information, counselling, advocacy, advice and guidance as well as a range of other activities.

Southend Mind has more than 40 years experience of delivering high quality mental health services to the people of Castle Point, Rochford and Southend.

Mind also covers central Essex and the South East of the county.

With one in four people experiencing mental health problems during their lifetime the charity offers vital support services.

Last month the charity launched an appeal to raise money to get the centre open to improve the lives of



SUPPORT: Sir Teddy Taylor with members of Southend Mind who are looking to raise money for the new mental health advice centre.

Picture by Mark Cleveland

those in the county suffering from mental health.

Former Rochford and Southend East MP, Sir Teddy Taylor, who is patron of the charity, explained that mental health illness is the largest single cause of disability in our society.

"It is particularly good in Southend because we have a good team of people there. The Jubilee Centre is going to see Southend leading the rest of Britain in mental health care.

"The idea is excit-

ing, with this new facility there will be a message to the rest of the country to show them what can be done for people suffering mental health and the local community should be proud of it."

If you would like to make a donation to help the Jubilee Centre appeal visit www.southendmind.org.uk

What do you think? Write to Readers' Letters, Yellow Advertiser, Acorn House, Great Oaks, Basildon, Essex, SS14 1AH, or e-mail letters@yellowad.co.uk

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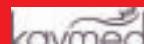
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Singer makes Christmas message to help charity

By Paul Giles

SINGER David Essex has recorded a Christmas message to boost donations for the Homeless Action Resource Project (HARP) Christmas Dinner Campaign.

Charity patron David took time out to record the message at Southend Radio after performing his last show of his tour in the town.

He said: "Southend is very close to my heart being an East End boy who has visited the town many times.

"However, I have recently visited HARP's new premises the Darnley Hotel, in York Road, Southend, that HARP expect to be opening by August 2013 where they will be



CHRISTMAS CAMPAIGN: Stephen Colyer with David Essex before recording the Christmas Dinner Campaign message.

combining their Day Centre and Night Shelter services.

"HARP do an amazing job in helping to turn around the lives of thousands of people, so the very

least I could do was get to Southend early and do my bit by lending a hand to the HARP Christmas Dinner Appeal, because I believe that nobody should be

alone, hungry and on the streets at anytime, least of all at Christmas".

Stephen Colyer, who works for HARP and is a close friend of David, explained over the course of the 12 days of Christmas HARP provides up to 700 dinners to homeless people.

He said: "We ask those who are more fortunate within our local community to try to find just £10 within their Christmas budget to give someone the gift of hope. We are truly grateful to David for his valuable time and support for HARP's work".

To donate £10 online visit www.harpsouthend.org.uk or by cheque made payable to HARP Ltd, 117, York Road, Southend-on-Sea, Essex, SS1 2DL.

Airport to introduce new service

SOUTHEND Airport will be expanding its routes with the addition of a service flying to Newquay starting next summer.

The service will fly passengers to the south west three times a week and it is expected 10,000 passengers will use the route.

The inaugural flight takes off from London Southend Airport on Thursday, June 20.

Hugh Aitken, easyJet UK commercial manager, said fares would start from as little as £30.99.

one way based on two people flying on the same booking.

He said: "We're thrilled to be

announcing this new route from London Southend to Newquay which opens up a fast connection to the 'English Riviera' and its great beaches, restaurants and attractions.

The new service makes the South West much more accessible, and certainly a lot faster to reach than the current road or rail alternatives.

"London Southend Airport is our

newest and fastest growing UK base with more than 400,000 passengers travelling with easyJet since opening in March this year.

"We're fully committed to delivering services from the airport which meets the needs of business and leisure travellers alike and sure that this new route will prove very popular."

Alastair Welch, managing director of Southend Airport, said destinations such as St Ives and the Eden project are now just 60 min-

utes flight time away, instead of a long car or rail journey.

He said: "We are delighted to offer another fantastic easyJet route from London Southend Airport – our very first mainland UK destination.

"We are sure Newquay is going to prove popular with Essex travellers for both short breaks and longer 'staycations' – not just for its surfing, but also for the simple and easy access it provides to the much admired Cornish coast."

► speedread

Theatre archive

THE Palace Theatre is looking for volunteers to help organise and file the theatres' archive to celebrate its centenary year.

The collection of posters, programmes, photos, plans and theatrical items have been collected and donated and now all need organising and scanned into digital form.

Contact Emily on 01702 390472 or e-mail emily@southendtheatres.org.uk

'What happened to Helen?' exhibition

THE Focal Point Gallery will open an exhibition called 'What Happened to Helen?' on Saturday, January 12.

Portraits of the Southend-raised actress Dame Helen Mirren will be on show in her role in the sadomasochistic context of Jean Genet's 1947 play 'The Maids'.

The exhibition in Southend Library will run until Saturday, March 30.

Sponsored swim

BLIND fundraiser Lucy Butcher, 20, from Southend, achieved her goal to complete a 5km sponsored swim in under three hours by swimming 250 lengths of Shoeburyness Leisure Centre pool in two hours 57 minutes.

Lucy trained four times a week for 13 months to be ready for her swim.

Suffering from depression, Lucy took a paracetamol overdose when she was 15 which caused her to have a liver transplant six days later that saved her life but left her blind.

She raised more than £300 in sponsorship and she intends to continue raising money for the charity in 2013.

Lucy said: "I chose Southend Mind because I suffer with depression and I know they help people like me and I want to make a difference."

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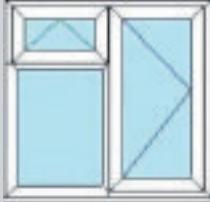
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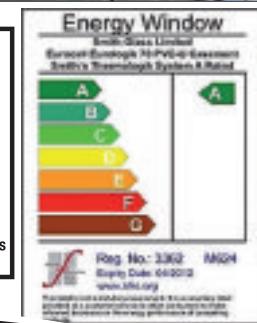
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Historic art is just a commute away

By Paul Giles

TO FLY to Amsterdam to visit a collection of Vincent Van Gogh's work and come back the same day sounded like it would be an elaborate but tiring trip.

However, the journey from Southend Airport took less time than it does to commute into London on the train from the seaside town.

The easyJet flight only took 35 minutes to arrive at Schiphol airport without any delay through check in or security.

My reason for going to Amsterdam was to view a new exhibition of Van Gogh's work to celebrate the renovation and 40th anniversary of the Van Gogh Exhibition, a collection of work I had seen part of almost a decade ago.

The collection of 75 paintings, selected letters and works on paper charting his quest to the heart of his artistic identity, has now been moved to the Hermitage Museum until April.

Masterpieces on show include Sunflowers, The Yellow House and The Potato Eaters, as well as early sketches and an extended Impressionism exhibition is all included in the show.

During a short walk between the two sites, visitors get the opportunity to view the city as the famous artist would have seen it himself.

This happens through an iPad relaying audio of translated letters Van Gogh wrote to his brother, accompanied by images on an app of the city as it would have appeared in the artist's time.

Within the reality of the modern day you can follow an art



ART TRAIL: Henk Schut looks at a replica of Van Gogh's shoes, while (above right) visitors use their iPads to follow the route.

installation by artist Henk Schut.

He has graced the route with a red rope stretching from the Van Gogh Museumplan right up to the Hermitage. The installation draws your gaze away from street level and your eyes take in the architecture that has existed since Van Gogh was living among the streets of the city.

The walk takes you through narrow streets, across canals, and over bridges to a new host for the works.

Speakers on the route within

shop windows and doorways add to the experience, with people walking past hearing the words Vincent once sent his brother in his personal letters.

A mixture of the two mediums creates a fresh perspective of architecture and heritage in the city.

Following the flight path back to Southend Airport I realised a day trip to Amsterdam was something I wanted to do again and do easily.

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Couple's sweet love

Ernie and Joan Keeble will spend Christmas surrounded by their children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren and great-great-grandchildren. They have lived in their Pitsea council house for 52 years and celebrated their 72nd wedding anniversary on December 16. They spoke to YA reporter Charles Thomson about their long lives together and the secret to a happy marriage.

ERNIE and Joan met outside the Railway Hotel in Pitsea in 1938, Joan was 14, Ernie 15.

"We used to gather there," says Ernie, now 89.

"I looked at her and I thought, 'She's not too bad'. I wasn't looking properly at the time, I suppose."

Joan, now 88, interjects. "I was walking to the market with my sisters and a gang of girls. Ernie was with his chums.

"They came up and offered us some sweets and we said 'No, thank you'. Then Ernie said, 'Would you like one of my toffees?'"

I liked his cheeky face and he had a cap on. I did fancy him. But I also fancied a toffee."

The pair then began courting.

"There wasn't much entertainment about," says Ernie.

"We used to go to the Pitsea pictures. It was so full of cigarette smoke you could hardly see the screen through it all."

"We'd bump in the side door to get out of paying. One boy would pay, then he'd go to the toilet when the film was about to start and open the door for us all!"

Before long, their families were firm friends. They would go on day trips in the summer to swim in Pitsea Creek.

"I almost drowned one time," Joan says. "I was just learning to swim. Ernie saved my life."

The pair married in 1940 and their first two sons, Alfred and John, followed in 1941 and 1942. In 1943 Ernie was conscripted into the army to fight in the Second World War, while Joan worked in a sewing factory at Tarpots, making uniforms for British troops.

When he returned, the couple lived in a bungalow on an unmade road until their third son Tony was born in 1959.

Ernie recalls living in the unmade road fondly. "There was no drainage for the sinks or anything. We had an old tin bath. It was outside toilets, and you had to bury it afterwards.

"It was hard but it was lovely. You could go in



HAPPY: Joan and Ernie Keeble.

Picture by Mark Cleveland

anybody's house. The doors were never locked. You can't do that anymore."

He says Pitsea has changed for the worse over the decades.

"The living conditions are better but the area is worse, absolutely. Everything's worse. The crowds. The thieving. The rowing. We never had that at all."

"We had one sergeant and a constable for all of Pitsea, Vange and Bowers Gifford. Sergeant Turner and Constable Riley. Sergeant Turner would offer you a punch-up rather than arrest you."

Today Ernie and Joan have six grandchildren, 29 great-grandchildren and two great-great-grandchildren.

What is the secret of staying together for so long? "The secret is that you've got to recognise each other as individuals," says Ernie. "You're not going to both be master of the same roost."

Joan has a more simplistic view. "We just have a good old laugh together," she says.

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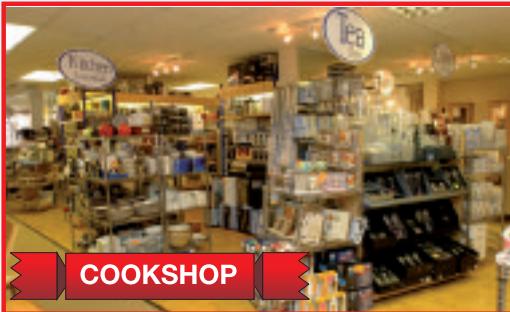
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It's panto time, oh yes it is!

By Liz Wade

THE GREAT thing about pantomimes is no one is ever too old to go, so it is at least one bit of festive fun that we will always be able to hold on to with the boys without hearing the usual moans of "I'm too old!"

In actual fact it was the boys enquiring about what pantos they'd be seeing this festive season that led us to enjoying a bit of Jack and the Beanstalk at the Queen's Theatre, Hornchurch, before another enjoyable night out in the audience of Cinderella at Thameside Theatre, Grays.

A truly magical scene awaited us at the Queen's Theatre thanks to an amazing stage design that set the mood for fun as soon as we sat down. With an outstanding cast, supported by the efforts of a group of wonderful children, the story unfolded with a few of the Queen's very own twists and turns, all of which led to lots of laughter, shouting and audience participation.

Simple Simon delighted with a performance that was at times reminiscent of the extremely funny Frank Spencer in Some Mothers Do 'Av 'Em, and just when I thought I had seen the best panto dame costume ever, out came another, so I was eventually torn between whether I liked the toad in the hole ensemble or the tree design best.

Mix this with a 'real' giant that left kids' mouths gaping, fantastic songs and a great script, I would say (without giving too much away) that the panto is a must for families, or anyone else come to think of it.

Another one not to be missed is Cinderella at Thameside Theatre, which once again failed to disappoint and continues to prove that smaller venues can pack just as much punch.

I can quite genuinely say I laughed from start to finish thanks to its great cast including former Eastenders and Hollyoaks star, Gemma Bissix, who made an extremely funny Fairy Flustered - the best we've ever seen.

Added to this a great performance by former star of The Bill, Chris Simmons, as Buttons, some chart songs that everyone could tap their feet along to, plenty of jokes and the hilarious Ugly Sisters - Millicent and Muriel Hardup - and they were on to



CLIMB: The cast of Jack and the Beanstalk, who perform at the Queen's Theatre.

a winner as the curtain went up.

Our highlights included Millicent (played by Andrew Lazarus) sitting on the other half's lap during his entrance, and returning later to leave a rather large lipstick mark on his head - much to the amusement of my youngest - a hilarious ballet scene, and a deflating pumpkin outfit that left Muriel and Millicent, as well as the entire audience, in stitches.

While no pantomime performance is ever the same, thanks to the delights of audience participation and the inevitable mishap, I can genuinely tell you one thing that you will see at the Thameside Theatre - a production that is totally enchanting.

For further information about Jack and the Beanstalk at the Queen's Theatre, which runs until January 12, 2013, visit www.queens-theatre.co.uk

theatre.co.uk or call the Box Office on 01708 443333, and for further information about Cinderella at Thameside Theatre, which runs until January 6, 2013, visit www.thurrock.gov.uk/theatre or call the Box Office on 0845 300 5264.

If you are searching for a specific pantomime, looking for something different or want to find something closer to home, here is a round-up of what else is on offer in the area.

■ Cinderella at the Cliffs Pavilion, Westcliff-on-Sea. Television star Shane Richie is returning to the Cliffs Pavilion this year as Buttons in Cinderella. The enchanting tale will be transformed from page to stage for the production, which runs from December 21 to January 6, 2013, but with tickets selling fast not even your Fairy Godmother will be able to help if you don't find out more by visiting www.southendtheatres.org.uk or by calling the Box Office on 01702 351135.

■ Cinderella at Kenneth More Theatre, Ilford: With a wave of a magic wand this rags to riches story will arrive at Kenneth More Theatre on December 13, and will be entertaining audiences up until January 19, 2013. Join Cinderella and friends in a show full of songs and laughter, joy and magic, and find out if handsome princes only happen in fairy tales.

Visit www.kmtheatre.co.uk or call the Box Office on 020 8553 4466.

■ Dick Whittington at the Civic Theatre, Chelmsford: Join Dick and his faithful feline friend on their journey to London during this year's production, which runs until January 6, 2013. For further information visit www.chelmsford.gov.uk/dick-whittington or call the Box Office on 01245 606505.

■ Peter Pan at Towngate Theatre, Basildon: Following last year's critically acclaimed production of Dick Whittington, the public voted for Peter Pan as their panto this year.

Simon Fielding returns to the theatre as the boy who never grew up, so why not join him, take the second star to the right and fly far, far away to Neverland. For further information about the production, which runs until January 6, 2013, visit www.towngatetheatre.co.uk or call the Box Office on 01268 465465.

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Volunteers praised

SOUTHERN Hospital chief executive Jacqueline Totterdell paid tribute to legions of volunteers who help support staff, patients and families at the hospital.

She said to them at an event to celebrate them last week: "You are all incredible, each and every one of you the help you give the hospital is priceless."

Essex poverty among worst in UK

ESSEX has some of the worst poverty in Britain, according to a new report.

Basildon, Harlow and Shoebury – where home ownership is low and benefit claimants are high – are among the worst areas.

Jaywick in Tendring is officially the most deprived area in England, according to The Joint Health & Wellbeing Strategy for Essex.

Airline celebrates inaugural flights to new destination

EASYJET celebrated its inaugural flights of its latest route from Southend Airport to Geneva last week.

Geneva, which is renowned for its artful watchmakers and lakeside views beside Europe's highest peak Mont Blanc, is one of the continent's most popular destinations for ski and snowboarders looking to maximise their time on the slopes, with several resorts such as La Clusaz, Chamonix and Morzine Avoriaz, no more than 90 minutes away.

Renew rail tickets before price hike

COMMUTERS with National Express train operator of c2c are advised to renew their

annual season tickets before the New Year price increase.

C2C has introduced special arrangements so that annual season tickets can be renewed up to two weeks before their expiry date.

The remaining days from their existing ticket will be transferred to their new season ticket, so early renewers do not miss out.

If commuters buy their ticket before January they will be charged at 2012 prices. Annual car parking tickets can also be renewed from now at 2012 prices.

other entries.

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Health pilot

A PILOT involving councils and health experts to support people living in their own homes has proved successful in Clacton.

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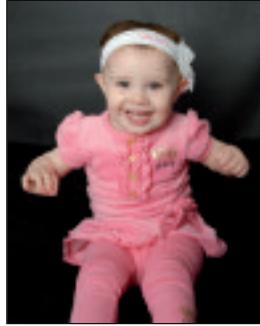
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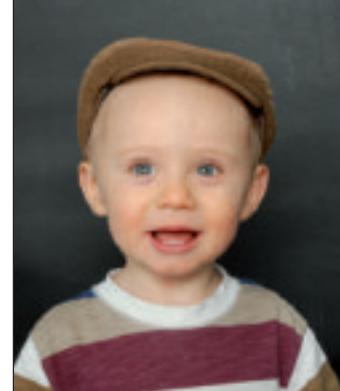
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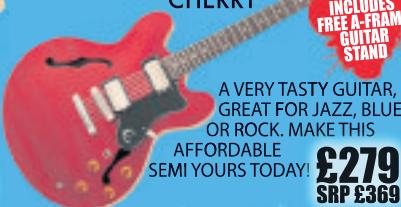


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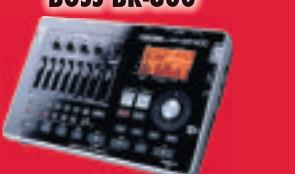
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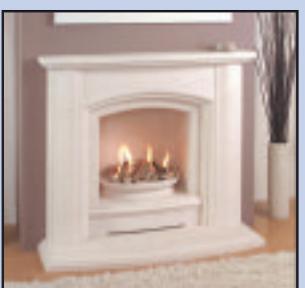
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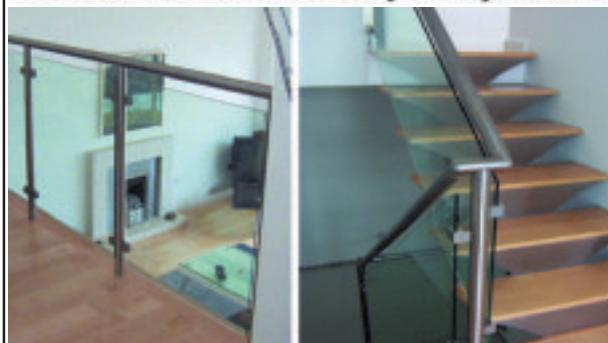
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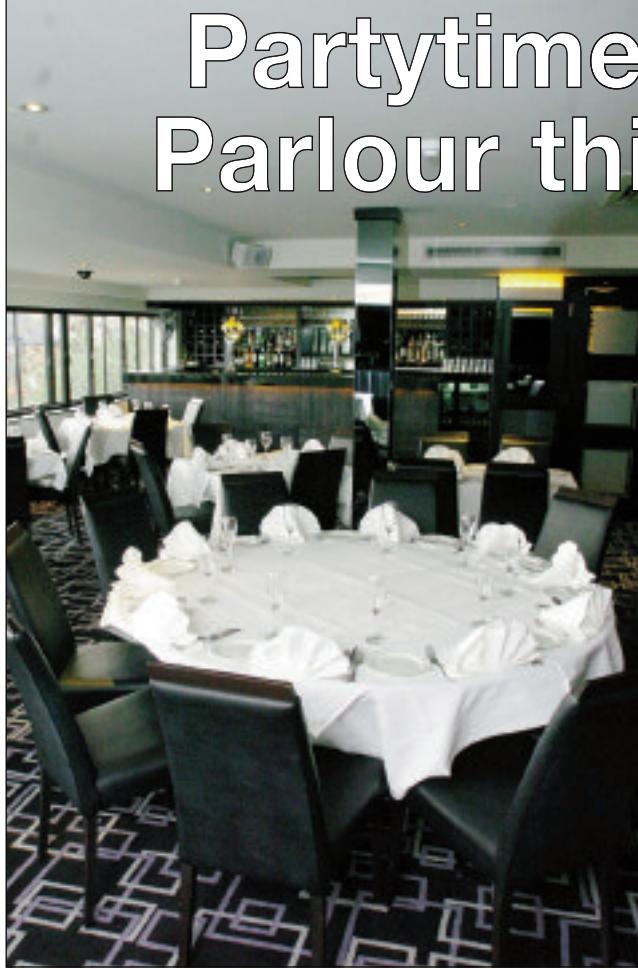
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eating out



Partytyme at Tandoori Parlour this Christmas

EVERYTHING from party nights to special banquets are on offer this Christmas, at the largest Indian restaurant in Essex.

Tandoori Parlour, at 61-63 Hart Road, Thundersley, is the perfect location for festive celebrations, thanks to its outstanding menu or buffet deals as well as a doubles for singles drinks promotion throughout the Christmas period.

If you are looking for somewhere to enjoy a pre-Christmas meal with your friends, family or work colleagues, then why not head for Tandoori Parlour. As well as its outstanding food and promotions, the restaurant also promises your table for the night, as well as DJ entertainment, hats, crackers and party novelties. There will be a disco and karaoke every night of the week through to January, with a resident DJ on both floors and a choice of Indian or English cuisine.

Both its four-course gourmet Indian buffet and its extended full English Christmas Menu costs from just £11.95 per person, while its four-course silver served Indian menu starts at just £15.95.

The top restaurant is also open throughout Christmas including Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, Boxing Day, New Years Eve and New Years Day, offering top food and entertainment.

Its Christmas Day Banquet, served from noon, will include traditional English cuisine or a full Indian menu, or both cuisines if you would like, and costs just £24.95 for adults and £12.95 for children under 12.

The restaurant's Boxing Day Buffet offers outstanding value at just £11.95 per person, while its popular New Year's Eve Grand Gala Night promises to be an evening to remember. The gala evening includes a full Indian menu or buffet, free champagne at midnight, Scottish Pipers and Drummers, two radio DJ's, a doubles for singles deal until 8.30pm and the chance to dance the night away until 2am.

On New Year's Day you can also celebrate in style at its Gourmet Luncheon offering a choice of a full menu or buffet.

Tandoori Parlour, which can seat more than 400 people, has outstanding facilities including a Crystal Room, a cocktail bar, dance floor and stage area.

The restaurant, which offers a takeaway service, is also fully air conditioned and licensed, and has full disabled facilities as well as a large car park opposite.

For further information or to make a reservation call Tandoori Parlour on 01268 793786 or 01268 793877.

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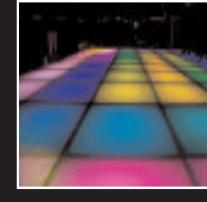
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cinema**Novel embellished to creative obesity**

By Damon Smith

HERE is a moment early in *The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey* when Gandalf The Grey (Sir Ian McKellen) turns to diminutive hero Bilbo Baggins (Martin Freeman) and counsels: "All good stories deserve embellishment."

Director Peter Jackson and co-writers Fran Walsh, Philippa Boyens and Guillermo del Toro have taken the wise wizard's words to heart and embellished JRR Tolkien's novel to the point of creative obesity.

Visually stunning flashbacks, which fail to advance the plot, are roughly hewn into a sprawling narrative that doesn't kick into second gear for a good 45 minutes.

The decision to shoot the film in 3D at the higher rate of 48 frames per second compared to the usual 24 frames will divide audiences.

Everything looks cleaner and crisper - you can see the stitching on Gandalf's hat and prosthetics in minute detail - but this might be too much heightened reality for a

sweeping fantasy that romanticises the bonds of trust between gung-ho brothers.

In the first deviation from the text, Jackson opens his picture at Bag End with the elderly Bilbo (Ian Holm) penning a book to his cousin Frodo (Elijah Wood).

We rewind 60 years to meet Bilbo (Freeman) in the Shire as he encounters Gandalf (McKellen) and a 13-strong company of dwarves, who intend to reclaim their lost gold from the dragon Smaug in his mountain lair.

After a sleepless night, Bilbo agrees to accompany dwarf leader Thorin Oakenshield (Richard Armitage) and his troops on their perilous mission.

"Axe or sword - what is your weapon of choice?" Thorin asks Bilbo.

"Well, I do have some skills with conkers," meekly replies the hobbit.

En route, the brave souls encounter elvish allies including Elrond (Hugo Weaving) and Galadriel (Cate Blanchett), as well as wretched Gollum (Andy Serkis) and the corpulent Goblin King (Barry

Humphries). Nerve-racking scenes with Gollum are undoubtedly the high-



HOBBIT: Gollum voiced by Andy Serkis. Picture by PA Photo/Warner Bros.

light of this opening salvo.

An hour of substance is bloated to 166 minutes of digital trickery and breathless action sequences including a protracted chase through the subterranean lair of the goblins.

One plot strand, involving a Necromancer gaining power in his stronghold at Dol Guldur, dangles tantalisingly in the background and will presumably be stitched into the narrative in the second film.

While some of the dwarves, notably Balin (Ken Stott) and Bofur (James Nesbitt), are gifted scenes to illustrate their personalities, most of Thorin's motley crew are indistinguishable aside from their rhyming names.

Freeman brings a touch of humour to his pint-sized weakling, who learns that, "True courage is knowing not when to take a life but when to spare one."

McKellen and co ease back into familiar supporting roles and Armitage swaggers as the vengeful son, who allows rage to cloud his judgement at a vital juncture.

When Bilbo subsequently remarks, "I do believe the worst is behind us," we know he must be joking, else the next two chapters, Desolation Of Smaug and There And Back Again, released in 2013 and 2014 respectively will be exceedingly dull affairs.



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ELECTRIC OVERBLANKET Dreamland, single, brand new, £20, boxed. Spa bubble bath, electric, brand new, boxed, £25. Tel: 07724 156 254.

BLACK GLASS TV STAND fits up to 42in TV, chrome, three shelves, £25 only. Tel: 01702 864 133.

GEORGE FOREMAN GRILL super jumbo size hardly used, still with box, vgc ideal xmas present £25ono. Tel: 07866 060 533 (benfleet).

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MENS GOLF CLUBS driver, irons 1-9, pitching wedge, sand wedge, two putters, bag with stand, broly, balls, trolley, £40. Tel: 01277 621006.

CHILDS SOLID PINE DESK 3-7yrs, vgc, £20. **BOYS RED BIKE**, wheel 18in, complete with stand, vgc, £20. Tel: 01277 623637.

VERY FAST PENTIUM 4 HP DESKTOP gc black & silver, plus 17in flatscreen, keyboard, mouse, free set up & free delivery, £65. Tel: 07795 363 391.

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TEFAL FOUR SLICE TOASTER as brand new, instructions, value almost £50, genuine xmas gift bargain only £10ono. Tel: 01707 353150.

GENUINE TIFFANY SILVER NECKLACE never worn, original box & bag, unwanted gift, £90, no offers. Tel: 01375 640 689 Corringham.

BOYS LEATHER MARLON BRANDO JACKET new, with tags, 6-7yrs, lovely Xmas present, £40ono. Tel: 01268 781 620.

SONY FLATSCREEN 32IN TV freeview & receiver & recorder, £90 omo, seen working. Tel: 01277 624 968.

SNOOKER TABLE 6ft x 3ft, free-standing, folding legs, cues, snooker & pool balls, vgc, £40. Tel: 01702 587 554.

TROLLEY FOR MOBILITY around the house, adjustable height, two trays, good clean cond, £40. Tel: 020 8524 3642.

6X3 SNOOKER TABLE vgc, folding legs, 3 cue's, set of balls + counter. £80 omo. Tel: 01702 523 012.

SINGLE BED orthopaedic mattress & headboard, solid pine frame, clean and vgc, £70. Tel: 01708 459 027.

X BOARD as new, £35. **GUITAR** 3/4 size, plus case & amp, hardly used, 65. Tel: 01702 342 006.

ELECTRIC FIRE free-standing, two bars, gold finish, very vgc, orange glass coals, flickering effect, £55. Tel: 01375 378 918.

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BULLWORKER new, boxed, exercise equipment, £20. IRON GYM EXERCISER £10. Tel: 07951 517 767.

BMX MONGOOSE MENACE 20in wheels, green, hardly used, exe cond, £60. Tel: 07960 877354.

GENUINE GENIE BRAS size 10, 16, 18, packs of three, black, white, nude, detachable pads, £25. Tel: 01268 761898.

NEST THREE COFFEE TABLES dark polished wood, carved legs, exe cond, £30. Tel: 01268 772 693.

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CHE GUEVARA ORIGINAL CUBAN SILK POSTER framed, circumstances forces sale, £95. Tel: 01702 298 225.

HY-PRO 6FT FOLDING SNOOKER/POOL TABLE Argos cat.335/7901, £50, buyer collects. Tel: 01268 451 710.

LARGE WOODEN DOLLS HOUSE gc, similar in Costco for £71, £25. Tel: Grays 07956 664 107.

GENUINE GUCCI LADIES WATCH stainless steel bangle strap 1500L model, £50. Tel: 01277 624 968.

37 PACKS INCONTINENCE PADS 14 per pack, size small, buyer collects, £100. Tel: Southend 541384.

90FT HAND CRAFTED PLASTER COVING corners, external corners, two ceiling roses, £90. Tel: 07890 212 545.

ACME ROOF TILES 300, 61/2 x 10½, buyer collects, £90. Tel: 020 8527 7234.

FULL SET OF MORSE DVDS 33 in all 25 still sealed buyer collects £25 tel: 01268 558 434.

SAFETY BOOTS black leather, size 11, £12. Tel: 01702 542 807.

CUTLERY SET 12 place setting plus extras, 24 carat gold plated, £30. Tel: 01277 651 093.

TUDOR DOLLS HOUSE three storeys high, £80. Tel: 01375 393 882.

CHILD'S WICKER ARMCHAIR as new, £9. Tel: 01702 475 702 Leigh on sea.

DINING ROOM TABLE four chairs, £75 omo. Tel: 01708 451 936.

SINGLE BED nearly new, cost over £200, hardly used, £25. Tel: 07988 749 960.

SNOOKER TABLE 6ft x 3ft, folds away, vgc, £30. Tel: 07986 161557.

METAL FILING CABINETS four drawer, two drawer, £20 & £10. Tel: 0208 5054596.

LADIES FLYING JACKET black, size 10-12, cost £325, accept £65. Tel: 07789 938 123.

BEANBAGS large, gc, sky blue & purple, £30 each. Tel: 01702 540864.

LEAPSTER WITH GAMES CASE as new, £8. Tel: 01375 859 880.

BABY ANNABELL DOLL & CRIB including mobile, vgc, £20ono. Tel: 07877 247 899.

GOLF CLUBS full set plus trolley, £60. Tel: 01702 600 778.

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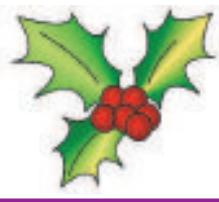
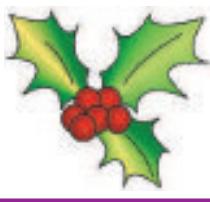
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to all my supporters
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**Councillor Dr Vel wishes you
all a very healthy, happy
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